

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

Report of the Commission to Investigate the Affairs of the Western Military Department.

Adoption of the Resolution in Favor of Aiding Emancipation.

Debate on the Bill Abolishing Slavery in the District of Columbia.

Action of the House on the Internal Tax Bill.

Letter from ex-President Pierce to Secretary Seward.

WASHINGTON, April 2, 1862.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIRS OF THE WESTERN MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

Commissioners Holt, Davis and Campbell, have made a report of their examination of the department of the West. The report enters into details, and is full of interest. It is shown that money, specially directed to the payment of certain claims, were diverted to the payment of the contractor for the construction of the St. Louis fortifications, and that in some instances, when mechanics and laborers could not be paid, large sums of sixty or seventy dollars were paid to them; in fact that the finances were always open to fraud; in fact that no one was held accountable. The report is regarded as a complete crushing of the pretensions of Fremont, and a practical illustration of at least his incapacity to manage public affairs of great importance.

The Commissioners to examine into the affairs of the Western, or Missouri Military Department, have made a voluminous report, in which they state they examined twelve hundred witnesses, and had claims presented to them amounting to \$5,000,000. They remark they have devoted the principal part of their report to an exposure of the abuses which characterized the late administration of that department, and testify to the integrity which generally has been displayed by merchants, mechanics and manufacturers, and to the honesty and integrity of the government. With regard to the late administration of the department, and among their dependents and favorites, and starting as the frauds which have been committed, and commencing a large majority of the claimants have presented themselves before the Commission unopposed by imputations either on their loyalty or honor.

ISSUE OF TREASURY CERTIFICATES.

Another million of six per cent certificates was issued to-day, in payment to contractors, and a much larger batch is prepared to go through to-morrow. The portion of one thousand is very large, which of course makes the process of their issue much more tedious than if they were willing to receive five thousands. Requisitions from the War and Navy departments have passed for fully forty-one millions, all of which will be issued in a few days. Interest accrued from the time of the presentation of the certificates to the Treasury, and so that no loss to the Government will result from any delay in their issue after they have been demanded.

PANIC OF THE REBELS AT RICHMOND.

Intelligence has been received from Richmond, via Baltimore, that the rebels are sending their tobacco to the interior, toward Danville and Farmville, and beyond Petersburg. It is added that private citizens have no control over cotton and tobacco, the military having assumed charge of them.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND TO BE BURNED BY THE REBELS.

It is rumored here to-day that the rebel Cabinet has decided to burn the city of Richmond on the approach of the Union army. If this diabolical system is pursued in the Southern confederacy, no hope can be entertained of the recognition of the Southern confederacy by any enlightened people. With their cities, their cotton, tobacco and other crops and property destroyed, they will present no motive to England or France to help them in their distress.

OPENING OF TRADE AND TRAVEL WITH VIRGINIA.

The Provost Marshal has given notice that the only passes now issued are for officers and soldiers who wish to visit the south side of the Potomac and return, and the only authorized articles are liquors and contraband of war.

SHIP BUSINESS ON THE ORANGE AND ALEXANDRIA RAILROAD.

Business was never so brisk on the line of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. All the locomotives, save one or two, are from Northern roads, and a number are also from the South. There are also employed several hundred burthen cars. To-day ten engines were out on the Orange road at one time.

FIRE AT ALEXANDRIA.

Green's warehouse, in Alexandria, was destroyed by fire this morning. Loss considerable.

APPLICATIONS FOR PERMITS TO CARRY ON BUSINESS AT RICHMOND.

The energy and enterprise of the Yankee nation has been significantly exhibited in the applications recently made to the Secretary of War. Among them are five applications for licenses to open hotels at Richmond upon the occupation of that city by the Union Army, and a large number for permission to cultivate the waste lands lately occupied by the Federal troops in Virginia in the vicinity of Washington.

In advance of the progress of the Colonization, the Union people are anxious to renovate the land of Dixie. These facts show that if the political agitators would remain quiet, the struggle between free and slave labor would soon be ended without their aid, and much sooner without their interference than with it.

THE STATE OF THE ROADS IN VIRGINIA.

The roads on the Virginia side are in such a condition that wagons have been found to be almost impossible to use, which is so deeply imbedded in mud that eight horses cannot pull it out.

REPORT FROM FORTRESS MONROE.

At three o'clock this afternoon all was quiet at Fortress Monroe.

NO FARE TO FORTRESS MONROE GRANTED.

The Secretary of War has been daily importuned for passes to Fortress Monroe, which he has invariably refused to give. It appears that he has been forbidden to order passes issued except for military purposes, and that the department has no power under the contract to pay the balance of the sum stipulated for the construction of the Stevens war steamer until it is completed and accepted by the government. A letter from Mr. Stevens to Mr. Welles, under date of October 17, 1861, suggests that he be allowed to prepare, at the expense of the government, a target, the cost not to exceed five hundred or two thousand dollars, which shall represent a section of the vessel and shall test its capability of resisting shot and shell, the experiments to be made before the Board of Examiners appointed by the Secretary for the purpose. The Secretary replies that, "no appropriation having been granted by Congress, it is impossible for the department to authorize the expenditure suggested, but if the Board consider it necessary the department will recommend Congress to refund any expense, not exceeding two thousand dollars, incurred to accomplish the wishes of the board. The correspondence exhibits the abiding confidence of Mr. Stevens in the excellence of the battery, and the willingness of the department to promote its completion when authorized by Congress. It is apparent, also, that during this delay the original intention, the necessity for which has been so signally demonstrated in the recent experiments in Norfolk harbor, has been continually improved by practical tests and scientific amendments, until it has been attained as near perfection as floating iron clad batteries can be.

BULL RUMBLE IN VERMONT.

L. D. Russell, of the London Times, with his horse and carriage, was seized from the chartered steamer Canoe, when about to leave Washington for Alexandria to-day. He had established himself on board, in anticipation of a most agreeable tour, but failed to escape the vigilance of Gen. Van Fleet, and was summarily put ashore, with his travelling equipage.

A MEMBER OF THE WASHINGTON CITY COUNCIL.

Mr. McGrath, a member of the Washington City Council, was accidentally drowned in the Potomac last evening, the boat in which he was sailing having been run over by a steamer.

THE BARRISTER GOING HOME.

Mr. Schieffelin, Minister from Bremen, is about to leave the United States on a visit to his home for several months.

REPORT CONTROVERTED.

People living near the Chain Bridge contradict the story, stating in a city paper, of a lady, named Tenenbaum, having been carried off from her residence, near Chain Bridge, by a detachment of Stewart's cavalry.

ARRIVAL OF AN AGENT FROM LIBERIA.

The Liberian government have sent Mr. John D. Johnson to procure the recognition of that republic by this government.

THE EXCURSION OF THE EPISCOPAL RECONSTRUCTIONISTS.

The reconstructionists in this diocese who decline to use Bishop Whittingham's prayer of thanksgiving for Union victories, excuse themselves on the ground that they cannot pray for what they do not desire, or thank God for what grieves them. The secession conscience here is remarkably sensitive about this time.

RETURN OF EXCURSIONISTS FROM MANASSAS.

Messrs. Edmonson, Warren and Dority, reported to have been captured by the rebels, having returned safely here from an excursion beyond Manassas, bringing home the little son of Mr. Edmonson, who had been in a school fifteen miles from Warrenton.

THURSDAY IN THE MILITARY HOSPITALS.

The number of sick soldiers in the government hospitals in the District at the last weekly report was two thousand three hundred and fourteen. Of these five hundred and thirty six are from New York regiments.

TROPHIES FROM THE REBEL CAMPS IN VIRGINIA.

Every day's examination among the deserted rebel camps on the Virginia side brings to light something new. Yesterday a new rifle cannon, of the largest calibre, was discovered buried about three miles from Shipping Point. The rebels no doubt intended to mount it at that point, but getting mired on the way from Brent's station, found it impossible to move it in either direction, and when they retreated buried it in order to prevent its falling into our hands.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

THIRTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS. FIRST SESSION.

Senate.

WASHINGTON, April 2, 1862.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WASHINGTON, April 2, 1862.

LIFE ANNUITIES.

Mr. Dimes, (rep. of N. Y.), introduced a bill, which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, authorizing the sale of annuities for life, and fixing the value thereof.

THE ARMY.

The House took up the Senate resolution providing that whenever military operations require the presence of two or more officers of the same grade in the same field or department, the President may make such assignment without regard to seniority of rank.

Mr. Washburn, (rep. of Ill.), said the resolution might be right, but if wrong it ought not to be passed. He trusted its consideration would be postponed till to-morrow. The resolution involved very serious consequences.

Mr. McKim, (Union of Ky.), did not see what practical good could arise from the passage of such a resolution. He, at present, could think of only two general uses to which it would operate. This conferring of such a power upon the President would tend to increase the disturbance of the relations now existing in the army. They were assuming too much in the way of legislation in regard to the branch of the public service to which they were a general officer might be equivalent to forcing him to resign.

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